

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for preparing for intraductal retrieval of fluid, cells and/or other material from a breast duct of a patient, comprising:  
administering an agent to the patient that increases retrievable fluid from a breast duct.

2. A method as in claim 1, wherein administering is accomplished by a mode selected from the group consisting of administering the agent intraductally, administering the agent systemically, and administering the agent topically.

3. A method as in claim 2, wherein the agent is administered intraductally to a breast duct, and the agent is selected from the group consisting of saline, phosphate buffered saline (PBS), an isotonic solution, a hypotonic solution, a buffered solution, a solution having a pH range of human tissue, blood or sera, a solution having a slightly acid pH, a solution having a slightly basic pH, and a nonabsorbable biocompatible solution.

4. A method as in claim 2, wherein the agent is administered systemically and comprises an agent selected from the group consisting of a hormone, oxytocin, prolactin, a breast duct secretion inducing factor, a natural herb or extract from a natural herb, silymarin, a growth factor, a vitamin, a protein, a muscle relaxant, and a small organic molecule.

5. A method as in claim 2, wherein the agent is administered intraductally to a breast duct, and the agent is selected from the group consisting of a protein, a colloid, a sugar, a polymer, mannitol, sorbitol, glucose, glycerol, sucrose, raffinose, fructose, lactulose, sodium chloride, polyethyleneglycol (PEG), maltodextrin, dextran (e.g. dextran 70), hydroxyethyl starch, fluid gelatin, a synthetic colloid, an antibody, a binding protein, albumin, a hormone, a breast duct secretion inducing factor, a natural herb or extract from a natural herb, silymarin, a surfactant, a growth factor, oxytocin, prolactin, a small organic molecule, a muscle relaxant, a ductal orifice dilator, and an agent that increases fluid secretion from a breast duct epithelium.

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1 6. A method as in claim 2, wherein the agent is intraductally  
2 administered and the agent is in a state selected from the group consisting of a non-liquid,  
3 a gel, an emulsion, a gas and a semi-solid.

1 7. A method as in claim 2, wherein the agent is intraductally  
2 administered agent and the agent comprises a carbonated fluid comprising super  
3 oxygenated fluid that is colder than room temperature before intraductal administration.

1 8. A method as in claim 1, further comprising collecting a portion of  
2 the increased breast duct fluid from a breast duct.

1 9. A method as in claim 8, wherein collecting comprises accessing a  
2 breast duct with a device and withdrawing a portion of the increased ductal fluid into the  
3 device.

1 10. A method as in claim 8, further comprising analyzing one or more  
2 of cells, fluid or other material in the breast duct after the retrievable fluid has been  
3 increased and a portion of it has been collected.

1 11. A method as in claim 10, wherein the step of analyzing comprises  
2 identifying a marker of a breast condition.

1 12. A method of collecting ductal fluid from a breast duct having  
2 artificially increased retrievable ductal fluid comprising accessing a breast duct with a  
3 device and withdrawing a portion of the ductal fluid into the device.

1 13. A method as in claim 12, wherein withdrawn ductal fluid  
2 comprises a plurality of ductal epithelial cells.

1 14. A method for increasing a retrievable cell amount in a breast duct  
2 comprising inducing cell sloughing within the duct by applying vibration to the duct.

1 15. A method as in claim 1 or claim 12 further comprising increasing a  
2 retrievable cell amount in a breast duct comprising inducing cell sloughing within the  
3 duct by applying vibration to the duct.

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